



# Canada: Work Permit & COVID-19 Travel Restrictions

Info provided by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC)

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## Short-term Highly-skilled Worker

Since June 12, 2017, high-skilled workers coming to perform work of a short duration may be exempt from the requirement to obtain a work permit.

The new work permit exemption for highly-skilled workers applies to all [NOC 0 and NOC A](#) workers. Eligible workers will be allowed one 15-day work permit-exempt stay in Canada every six months, or one 30-day work permit-exempt stay every 12 months. Please review the eligibility criteria here [Short-term \(15 or 30 days\) work permit exemption - Canada.ca](#)

## Work Permit - Applying Outside Canada

A work permit is usually required to work in Canada on a temporary basis. If your intention prior to come to Canada is to work in our labor market, then it is important to apply for this document **before your arrival to Canada**.

Most foreign nationals need a work permit to work in Canada. If you're not sure, you can [find out if you need a work permit](#)

## Get the right work permit for your situation

There are 2 types of work permits.

### 1. Employer-specific work permit

An **employer-specific work permit** lets you work in Canada according to the conditions on your work permit, such as:

- the name of the specific employer you can work for
- how long you can work
- the location where you can work (if applicable)

Before you submit your application for an employer-specific work permit, the employer who wants to hire you must [complete certain steps](#) and give you either a copy of a [Labor Market Impact Assessment](#) or an offer of employment number to include in your application.

**Please note: Employer-specific work permits:** In both the [Temporary Foreign Worker Program](#) and the [International Mobility Program](#), work permits are issued for foreign nationals to work in a specific occupation. The occupation is restricted to the National Occupational

*Classification (NOC) code provided by the employer in the **Labor Market Impact Assessment** LMIA application or in the offer of employment for LMIA-exempt workers.*

### **Labour Market Impact Assessment Exemptions - All categories**

In most cases, obtaining a Labor Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) from Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) is necessary if you want to obtain a work permit in Canada.

For some types of work, **you may be exempt from obtaining a LMIA if you meet certain conditions.**

Use this [online tool](#) to verify if the kind of work permit you need is LMIA exempt.

If your intended job offer is LMIA exempt, you will need from your employer:

- An employer compliance fee, and
- An offer of employment form your employer may obtain through the [Employer Portal](#):
  - some employers are exempt from the employer compliance regime, please see our [website](#) for more details.

For more information on LMIA exemptions, please visit [Employer-specific work permits with Labor Market Impact Assessment \(LMIA\) exemptions \(International Mobility Program\) - Canada.ca](#).

## **2. Open work permit**

An **open work permit** lets you work for any employer in Canada, except for one that:

- is listed as ineligible on the [list of employers who have failed to comply with the conditions](#) or
- regularly offers striptease, erotic dance, escort services or erotic massages

You can only get an open work permit in [specific situations](#).

## **Not sure which one you should get?**

Find out here what [type of work permit](#) you need for your situation.

## **How to apply**

To apply, please visit here [Work permit: How to apply - Canada.ca](#).

## **Coronavirus - Travel restrictions to Canada**

The Government of Canada is closely monitoring COVID-19 and its impact on IRCC clients. Until further notice, most people cannot travel to Canada, even if they have a valid visitor visa or electronic travel authorization (eTA).

You can [travel to Canada or be permitted to enter Canada](#) if you are:

- An eligible [immediate family member](#) or [extended family member](#) of a Canadian citizen or permanent resident,
- A foreign national who is coming for an [essential \(non-discretionary\) purpose](#) from the United States (U.S.),
- A foreign national who is coming for an essential (non-discretionary) purpose from a country other than the U.S., and are [exempt from the travel restrictions](#),
- Seeking an exemption from the travel restrictions on [compassionate grounds](#),
- An [eligible foreign student](#), [etc.](#)

In any case, if you're travelling by air, you need to:

- Pass a health check conducted by airlines before you're allowed to board your flight, and
- [Wear a non-medical mask or face covering during travel](#) (including to the place you'll quarantine).

As of November 21, 2020, you must use [ArriveCAN](#) before checking in at the airport or crossing the border to submit mandatory travel information required for entry into Canada.

When you arrive in Canada, they will assess your health before you leave the port of entry. If you're a foreign national, and you have symptoms of COVID-19, you won't be allowed to enter Canada.

You must have a plan to **quarantine for 14 days** when you arrive in Canada. **This is mandatory, even if you have no symptoms.** If you don't have a plan, you should not travel to Canada as you may not be allowed to enter the country.

For more information on the situation and to receive up-to-date information, please consult the [How the coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\) is affecting immigration, refugees, citizenship and passport services](#) page, where you will also find answers to your most common questions about travel restrictions and exemptions.

***Important – Please reconfirm the above with [Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada \(IRCC\)](#) and a subject matter expert for updates applicable to your case.***

#### **For More Information**

The U.S. Commercial Service in Toronto, Canada can be contacted via e-mail at: [shweta.nagpal@trade.gov](mailto:shweta.nagpal@trade.gov); Phone: 437 333 9015; or visit our website: [www.trade.gov/canada](http://www.trade.gov/canada).